THE FIFTH DAY.

FRIDAY, THE 2nd MARCH 1928.

The Assembly met again at 11-30 A. M. on the 2nd March 1928.

68. Aids to municipalities.

MR. M. M. ABRAHAM MALIAKAL (*Member, Municipal Council, Kottayam*) said that the Dewan who had acquired intimate knowledge about every nook and corner of the country might certainly be aware of the paucity of good roads in North Travancore, particularly in the Kottayam town. The municipal council, Kottayam, was putting forth its best efforts to improve the roads in the town. It had spent very nearly Rs. 950 for maintenance and repair of roads in the year 1102 itself. But the grant which Government were giving for the purpose was only Rs. 400. The municipality was also doing its best to open new roads in the town. It had spent nearly Rs. 8,000 under this head. But many more roads remained either to be repaired or to be newly opened. In the Budget for 1103 a sum of Rs. 7,000 was allotted for the purpose. The financial condition of the municipality did not, however, justify such large expenditure every year. It was absolutely necessary therefore that Government should contribute at least 50 per cent. of the expenditure incurred by the municipality for the opening of new roads.

Another item of expenditure which bore hard on the municipality was the court fees paid on the complaints preferred by the council under the Municipal Regulation. The expenditure on this head now came to about Rs. 800 a year. It would be a great help not only to the Kottayam municipality but to all municipalities if the complaints preferred by them were exempted from the operation of the Court Fees Regulation, or if Sirkar stamps were permitted to be used by the municipalities.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Abraham Maliakal, I must congratulate the Kottayam municipality on its enterprise in the matter of road-making within the town. Your suggestion that Government should contribute one half of the cost of road-making cannot be viewed in isolation as regards Kottayam itself. It is a comprehensive proposal which will affect all municipalities and as such it is a large question which will require careful consideration.

In regard to the exemption of municipal petitions from court fees, as you know, it is not in accordance with the provisions of the Court Fees Regulation and any change will necessitate an amendment of the law possibly in more directions than one. However, the question has been raised by the municipalities of Shencottah and Quilon and the Government have already instituted an enquiry in the matter.

69. Amendment of the provisions of the Municipal Regulation relating to the election of municipal councillors.

MR. M. V. NARAYANAN NAMPUTIRIPAD (*Member, Municipal Council, Alwaye*) pointed out certain defects in the rules for the election of municipal councillors issued by Government under date the 5th January 1921. The rules, in his opinion, stood in need of amendment. As specific instances where they were defective, he pointed out rule 26 relating to identification of voters, rules 28 and 29 relating to the recording of votes by illiterate persons, and the rules regarding the disposal of election petitions. According to the existing rules, disputes arising out of elections were to be decided by the Dewan Peishkars or their Assistants, who, it was hardly necessary to say, were incompetent to tackle the intricate questions of law raised before them. The member suggested that the jurisdiction for the settlement of election disputes should be vested either in District Judges or in commissions

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appointed *ad hoc* and that appeal should lie from their decisions to the High Court. In any case before the rules were amended, the member would suggest that the proposed amendments might be referred to the various municipal councils.

DEWAN'S REPLY : Mr. Narayanan Namputiri, the point you raised in regard to the amendment of the Municipal Regulation and the rules under it in the matter of election, will receive the consideration of Government. Sooner or later the time must come when the municipal election rules will have to be revised ; and the question of who should constitute the revising or appellate authority in election disputes is already engaging the attention of Government.

70. Needs of Nanjanad.

Mr. KANAKKU MATHEVAN PILLAI PERUMAL PILLAI (*Member, Agastiswaram taluk*) said that new reservoirs should be constructed in Nanjanad and that the existing tanks should be regularly repaired. The Alathurayar should also be extended. A road should be opened from Marungur Subrahmanyaswami Koil through Kominachanputhur to the Tovala channel. Another road should be opened from the Myladi camp-shed to the Tovala channel through Thanumalayam Block Sluice. A third road should be opened from the N. B. Channel, 13th mile, to Marutvamalai through Oseravilacheri, Lakshmipuram, Perumalpuram, etc. and the banks of the channel should be metalled. Again, a road should be opened from Chantanputhur to Pappanurkulam through Virusadicheri, and the Parakkai-Tamarakulam road should be metalled. The member also referred to the opening of two other roads *viz.*, (*a*) from the Ozhugenaseri-Terur road to the Theraikalputur-Terur road, through Putugramam and Pitchatikulam cheries; and (*b*) a road from Kottaram to the Vattakotta road through Narikulam. The banks of the Narayanikulam in Kulasekharapuram should also be widened. A veterinary hospital should be opened at Myladi. In the interest of agriculture, the ryots in the Agasteeswaram taluk should also be granted free passes for collecting timber from the forests in the Tovala taluk for making agricultural implements. As regards the salt industry in Nanjinad, the member requested that Government might give due encouragement to the industry.

In this connection the member handed over to the Dewan a representation signed by himself and certain other members of the Assembly regarding the removal of silt from the tank beds in Nanjinad. They said that Government had by a recent notification prohibited the removal of the silt from tank beds. This was injurious to agriculture in more than one way. The silt from the tank-beds served in the first place as good manure, and was being made use of abundantly by the ryots. Secondly, by removing the silt deposited in the tanks every year, the ryots were helping to deepen the tanks. The notification had therefore to be cancelled.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Mathevan Pillai Perumal Pillai, I do not think time will permit of my giving you immediate answers to all the points you have raised.

In regard to the construction of new reservoirs, repair of existing tanks, and extension of the Alathurayar, a scheme was once upon a time drawn up to supplement the supply to the area and relieve the strain on the Thovala channel by extending the Alathurayar below the Pulikurichi tank.

The scheme is estimated to cost a great deal of money, about a lakh and twenty thousand rupees. But as any such scheme will not bring any further lands under cultivation, there is no immediate need to proceed with the scheme.

In regard to the first three roads *i. e.*, (1) a road from Marungur Subramonia Swami Kovil through Kominachanputur to the Tovala channel, (2) a road from the Myladi camp-shed to the Tovala channel, through Thanumalayam Block sluice, and (3) a road from the N. B. channel, 13th mile, to Marutvamalai, through Osaravilacheri, Lekshmipuram, etc., and metalling the banks of the channel, the Executive Engineer is preparing estimates in respect of them.

As regards the road from Chantanputur to Pappanurkulam, the whole length of the road is only about 36 miles and the cost is slight. The Chief Engineer proposes taking that question up.

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